

Shall the Children be Spanked— Or Their Parents?

That's the Vital Problem of the Day, Declares a Chicago Judge, Aroused by the Alarming Epidemic of "Puppy Love" Elopements.

"I Love Walter Very Dearly," Said 12-Year-Old Bernice Cook When Police Caught Her and Her Schoolboy Lover, Walter Coffee, 18, in Milwaukee. After a Frantic Telegram for Money Revealed Their Whereabouts.



Twelve-Year-Old Bernice Cook of Wilmette, Ill., "Baby" of the Juvenile Elopers, Who Threw Away Her Grammar Book and Ran Away with a Grown-up Schoolmate.

What's wrong with our children?

A BROTHER AND SISTER, 17 and 19 years old, fully aware of relationship, elope and marry. A BOY AND GIRL, also 17 and 19, run away from their homes in Toledo, sending back word that they will be good and won't get married.

A 17-YEAR-OLD GIRL of Detroit kills herself because her mother forbids her to associate with a widower.

ELOPING HIGH SCHOOL couples return to Lafayette, Ind., and the 16-year-old girl "contract bride" recites experience, sighing for her fiancé.

"LOVE SCHOOL" conductor of Peoria, Ill., arrested in Duluth with a 14-year-old girl, goes on trial.

A WISCONSIN GIRL, 18, elopes to Bay City, Mich., with a 19-year-old boy.

IN DENVER a 59-year-old teacher is found guilty of contributing to the delinquency of a 16-year-old girl, but cannot be punished because of Colorado laws.

A 16-YEAR-OLD Chicago girl disappears from her home, after reading about excitement of Hollywood movieland.

ANOTHER CHICAGO GIRL is missing without explanation. Her father, fearing foul play, reports that she has been gone four months.

A 17-YEAR-OLD Atlanta boy, in jail on charge of violating the Mann act, smilingly announces that he married his 17-year-old sweetheart in his cell.

A BOY AND GIRL, 19 and 18, of Crystal Lake, Ill., traveled to San Francisco and married after the federal grand jury decided not to hold them under the Mann act.

A GIRL OF 12 and a boy of 18, students of the Wilmette grammar school, Chicago, were apprehended in Milwaukee after police search.

TWO LITTLE GIRLS, one 18, elope with a youthful football player of Haverhill, Mass., and four eastern states before he marries one of them.

FOURTEEN-YEAR-OLD GIRL and 18-year-old boy leave their homes in Chicago, register in a Loop hotel as a beginning of life together.

A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT, 17, of Mesick, Mich., shot and killed his 16-year-old schoolmate, seriously wounded his sweetheart and took his own life after a quarrel at a party.

THESE 15 cases are only as many straws pointing the direction of the wind as it blows over the land of youth. Apparently it's a thoroughly ill wind and blows nobody good!

What is the matter with our children? Who is to blame for the alarming conditions in student clubs and "crowds"?

Too much prosperity is the destructive influence, according to Vice-President Coolidge. "People have too much money and use it wrongly. The cure of course is religion. The American people are too smart to let such a force for good die out." This is his statement.

Mrs. Idorna N. Loren of the National Sanitary Service Company of Chicago is more analytical:

"Adolescent child life is on the rampage, not only locally but nationally. The blame, I believe, lies in erroneous ideals which have arisen through condoning of public conduct that a few years ago wouldn't have been dreamed of. An all-night party or an elopement is spoken of as a matter of achievement and surrounded with a certain glamour. Youth's energies seeking an out-

let, need only the thrill of these ideas to attempt the new, the unexpected, even the forbidden.

"Wisdom in the mind of the young means tragedy in the home of the parent. Experiences beyond their years are created in the minds and lives of boys and girls at the most impressionable age. The remedy? Stop this flaunting of high, wild life and sensationalism. National effort, national control and national public opinion can do it."

However, the Rev. William A. Greist of St. Paul's Methodist Church of Lafayette, Ind., where youthful elopement has become almost an organized movement under the able direction of 17-year-old "Dave" Buck, "Sheik of Lafayette" and bellhop in a leading hotel, insists that the situation is up to mothers.

"The most fundamental evil is the mother who sits at a bridge table six days a week. She is responsible for the moral laxity in the home. There are too many of her kind in America."

And Judge Lawrence Jacobs of the Chicago Boys' Court makes the flat statement that the real remedy is spanking, for parents! "What these children need," he said, "is a good, old-fashioned spanking. Furthermore, in nearly every case you will find paternal indulgence. It wouldn't be a bad idea to hand out a little of the same corrective to the parents. I think with a few public spankings of children and their parents, the fashion of child elopement suddenly would become unpopular."

Perhaps no stranger case ever has come before the public than that of Elizabeth M. Hafner, 19-year-old adopted daughter of a Bronx, N. Y., family, and her brother, 17-year-old John H. Crozier, who visited his sister recently after they had been separated since childhood and, falling madly in love with her as she did with him, according to their stories, arranged that they run away to Binghamton, N. Y. There they were married by a justice of the peace and repaired to the home of the boy's guardian, then absent from the city, for a honeymoon.

It was when the girl returned to New York and what had happened came to light after she had expressed her sentiments to a friend.

"I can't believe he is my brother," she stated, according to the friend. "I love him and don't know what I will do without him."

Pretty Olive Soulliere, who just had passed



Glenn and Lavan Cunningham, 17 and 19, Respectively, and Mary Alice Morehouse, 16, Principals in the Indiana School "Trial Marriage." Lavan and Mary Were Arrested in a Bloomington, Ill., Hotel. Glenn Ran Away with Mary Frances Zufall, 15, Shown at Left.

her 17th birthday, locked herself in her room in the pretty home in Detroit where she lived with her mother, after she had been forbidden to associate with a widower with whom she had become infatuated, and shot herself.

"Mother, try to forgive me," read the note she left. "I loved him very much. I could never leave him. Please do not send him to jail. I die in his stead."

And of course the love cultist high school students of Lafayette, Ind., are known from end to end of the country throughout which their antics are said to have inspired many in imitation. It was following a gay party that six youngsters, whose ages range between 14 and 19, embarked on an informal honeymoon trip, and six other boys and girls, who planned to elope at the same time, postponed their venture at the last moment.

Mary Alice Morehouse, a grammar school student of 16 years, daughter of well-to-do, cultured parents, slipped away on a train with Lavan Cunningham, 19,



Ruth Carey, 16, Whose Elopement with "The Schoolboy Sheik of Haverhill" Ended in Marriage. Hubby Now Seeks a Job.

and registered in a Bloomington, Ill., hotel. A trial marriage contract, signed by each, was found in the room after the police had taken the children away. Within an hour after the departure from Lafayette of this couple, Mary Frances Zufall, 15, left for St. Louis with Glenn Cunningham, Lavan's 17-year-old brother. Before the next morning Mabel Cartright, 14, and Leonard Johnston, 16, also boarded a train to begin life together in Kansas City.

Like the others, the two couples last named were arrested and the girls brought home immediately. No charges were made against either them or the boys, since the town was so shocked by their indiscretion that municipal authorities as well as parents seemed stunned.

The "Sheik of Haverhill" is the sobriquet of Billy Starbird, youthful football player who left his home for an adventurous tour with 16-year-old Ruth Carey of Methuen, together with Mae Barry, also of Methuen, and Charles Nevin. They set out in an automobile belonging to Ruth's uncle. Upon reaching Buffalo, in the course of their wanderings, several things happened. Billy and Ruth were married, for one, and Mae and Charles fell out, for another. Also Mae fell in love with a Buffalo youth and decided to remain in the lake city after the others had left for home.

Andrew William Benson and Helen Freeman of Crystal Lake, Ill., 19 and 18, respectively, confronted with the possibility of a parental objection to their love affair, took the matter in their own hands and eloped to San Jose, Cal. They drove there in a friend's automobile. Someone reported to the Federal authorities that the girl had no wedding ring. So Benson was arrested on suspicion of having violated the Mann act, but when the Grand Jury heard the true story—a pure love story devoid of sordidness—they were let go—to the parents—and then resumed their honeymoon on \$100 which the jury gave to them.

The real "baby" of the crowd of children with grown-up ideas is Bernice Cook, 12, of Wilmette, Ill., whose father is a Chicago attorney. She went to grammar school at Wilmette and there met Walter Coffee, 18, a high school boy, who flattered her with his attentions because he was "grown up." She eloped with him in the automobile he "borrowed" from his father, but at Milwaukee he ran out of funds and when he telegraphed to a chum for money his whereabouts were disclosed and he and the child were apprehended.

Andrew Wm. Benson, 19, and 18-Year-Old Bride, Formerly Helen Freeman, Who Got the Benefit of Clergy in San Francisco After a Grand Jury Decided Not to Prosecute. Their Homes Were in Crystal Lake, Ill.

